



**The Census Bureau
is developing
special materials
to help spiritual
leaders spread
the word that
answering
the census is
important for
everyone.**

Spiritual Leaders Lead the Way in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

Tribal Elders and Spiritual leaders are influential spokespersons for Census 2000 – because they care about tribal community soul (land & people) and because people respect them and what they say.

Why Should Spiritual Leaders Care About Census 2000?



- *The census helps tribal elders and leaders understand what their communities need.* Many communities use census information to attract new business or plan for growth. In fact, many tribal groups use the census numbers to plan new facilities and programs for their communities. But if some segments of the tribal population don't participate as much as others, those tribal members will be underrepresented.
- *The information collected by the census is an important tool for federal and tribal government decision-making.* The Constitution of the United States mandates a census every 10 years to determine how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. The census helps direct the distribution of billions of dollars in state and federal funding to rural and urban areas that need them. These programs help children, the elderly and the unemployed, as well as people without housing and people with disabilities – people in your congregation and in your community.
- *The Census Bureau respects the confidentiality of people who answer the census.* By law, the Census Bureau cannot share the answers it receives with others, including welfare agencies, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Internal Revenue Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, tribal officials, tribal courts, tribal police, and the military. Anyone who breaks this law can receive up to five years in prison and \$5,000 in fines. The law works – millions of questionnaires were processed during the 1990s without any breach of trust. Therefore, census workers swear to the oath of confidentiality and the American Indian word of honor has true meaning behind it.

How Can Spiritual Leaders Help Motivate Participation in Census 2000?



- *Help the Census Bureau explain why taking part in the census is important for American Indians and Alaska Natives,* by making announcements in your bulletins and newsletters – and even your religious services. Brochures and sample announcements will be available for your use.
- *Increase awareness in your religious/spiritual gatherings, reservation centers and community,* by reminding your members about key census activities.
- *Spread the word about Census 2000 jobs.* Hiring from the community is an important part of Census 2000's strategy for success. Post information about jobs and tell applicants to call **1-888-325-7733** for more information.

An Equal Opportunity Employer
U.S. Census Bureau

**Encourage
people in your
congregation and
community to fill
out their census
forms and mail
them back
as quickly as
possible.**

**For additional
information about
Census 2000, visit
the Census Bureau's
Internet site at
<http://www.census.gov>
or call one of our
Regional Census Centers
across the country:**

**Atlanta 404-331-0573
Boston 617-424-4977
Charlotte 704-344-6624
Chicago 312-353-9759
Dallas 214-655-3060
Denver 303-231-5029
Detroit 248-967-9524
Kansas City 816-801-2020
Los Angeles 818-904-6522
New York City 212-620-7702
or 212-620-7703
Philadelphia 215-597-8312
Seattle 206-553-5882**

- *Encourage people in your religious/spiritual gatherings to volunteer for census activities, including preparing job seekers to take census tests and staffing Questionnaire Assistance Centers - places where people can get help filling out the forms. To ensure that everyone is included in Census 2000, the Census Bureau will assist people in their native language as appropriate.*
- *Provide space for Census 2000 activities. If you have space available, let the Census Bureau use it to test applicants or train new recruits. We're also looking for space for Questionnaire Assistance Centers.*
- *Contact your tribal government's Census 2000 Complete Count Committee to find out how you can become involved in local activities organized to promote the census. Call the Regional Census Center listed below for more information. If your area has not yet formed a Complete Count Committee, urge your highest elected official to do so! Complete Count Committees are made up of people in your own community or regional area who are your neighbors and friends.*

When Will Census 2000 Need Help From Spiritual and Tribal Leaders?



1998-1999	Help us spread the word that answering the census is important and safe – and that job opportunities are opening up.
January 2000	Look for additional materials – developed especially for you – which will help you plan your census activities over the next few months, including a brochure and suggested announcements for your religious services, newsletters and bulletins.
March-April 2000	Encourage people in your gatherings and community to fill out their census forms and mail them back as quickly as possible.
May 2000	Encourage people to cooperate with the census workers who will be visiting homes that did not mail back their completed questionnaires.



**Generations are counting on this.
Don't leave it blank.**